AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the

application:

1.   (Currently amended) A performance prediction system, comprising:

at least one memory to store a plurality of computer program components, the

computer program components further comprising:

a query component for receiving queries submitted by users for data

relevant to the probability that a transaction with an entity of

interest will be successful;

a data gathering component for storing relevant data about submitted

queries; and

a meta-query component responsive to a meta-query for returning

information regarding previously submitted queries; and

at least one data processor to execute the computer program components.

2.   (Currently amended) A system as in claim 1, where the plurality of computer

program components further comprises a performance-prediction component that uses data

comprising the stored submitted query data in making estimations relevant to the likelihood

of success of a transaction involving ~~an~~ the entity of interest ~~will be successful~~.

3.   (Previously presented)   A system as in claim 1, where the meta-query component returns copies of submitted queries when executed.

4.   (Previously presented)   A system as in claim 1, where the meta-query component returns edited copies of submitted queries when executed.

5.   (Previously presented)   A system as in claim 1, where the meta-query component returns an indication of a number of queries that have been submitted to the system during a particular time period when executed.

6.   (Previously presented)   A system as in claim 1, where the meta-query component when executed allows a user to register to be notified at some future time of submitted queries that are received about that user.

7.   (Previously presented)   A system as in claim 1, where the meta-query component when executed allows a user to register to be notified whenever a specified number of queries about that user have been submitted to the system.

8.   (Previously presented) A system as in claim 1, where the query component when executed also comprises a discovery component that allows users to receive a list of entities that satisfy certain criteria.

9.   (Previously presented)   A system as in claim 1, where the meta-query

component when executed allows a business to obtain information about queries submitted

to the system during a particular time period, and which returned a list of companies that

include that business.

10.   (Previously presented)   A system as in claim 1, where the meta-query

component when executed allows a business to obtain information about queries submitted

to the system during a particular time period, and which returned a list of companies that did

not include that business.

11.   (Previously presented)   A system as in claim 1, where the performance

prediction component determines statistical correlations between patterns of submitted

queries when executed.

12.   (Previously presented)   A system as in claim 11, where the performance

prediction component when executed uses one of actual and predicted performance of

entities, and uses the statistical correlations to predict likely future performance based on past

and present query data.

13.   (Currently amended)   A performance prediction service accessible by a user

over a data communications network, said service comprising:

a computer program stored on a computer readable media, wherein the computer

program uses ~~acquired~~ knowledge ~~of~~ <u>acquired in responding to</u> previously

submitted queries <u>which sought data relevant to the probability that a</u>

<u>transaction with an entity of interest would be successful</u> when making

predictions concerning the future performance of ~~an~~ <u>the</u> entity of interest; and

a data processor to execute the computer program ~~product~~.

14.   (Previously presented) A performance prediction service as in claim 13,

where said computer program further analyzes query patterns and at least one of an actual or

predicted performance of the entity of interest, and observes correlations between queries,

query patterns and performance to facilitate the prediction of future performance of the entity

of interest when executed by the data processor.

15.   (Previously presented) A performance prediction service as in claim 13,

where said computer program further returns, in response to receiving a meta-query from the

user, information that is descriptive of previously submitted queries about the entity of

interest when executed by the data processor.

16.   (Previously presented) A performance prediction service as in claim 13,

where said computer program further returns, in response to receiving a meta-query from the

user, edited information that is descriptive of previously submitted queries about the entity of

interest when executed by the data processor.

17. (Previously presented) A performance prediction service as in claim 13, where said computer program further returns, in response to receiving a meta-query from the user, copies of previously submitted queries about the entity of interest when executed by the data processor.

18. (Currently amended) A performance prediction system, comprising:

at least one memory to store a plurality of computer program components, the

computer program components further comprising:

a query component for fulfilling ~~received~~ performance queries received from

users, wherein the queries seek data relevant to the probability that a

transaction with an entity of interest will be successful;

a source of data comprising performance prediction data, the source coupled

to said query component;

a data gathering component for collecting query-relevant data for submitted

queries and for storing the query-relevant data in a submitted query

database; and

a meta-query component responsive to a received meta-query and coupled to

the submitted query database for accessing the query-relevant data for

producing enhanced performance prediction information that

comprises query-relevant information; and

at least one data processor to execute the components of the computer

program.

19.   (Original) The system as in claim 18, wherein the enhanced performance

prediction information comprises filtered query-relevant information.

20.   (Currently amended) A ~~computer-program-implemented method~~ computer

program product comprising a memory medium storing a computer program operable to

provide performance prediction information when executed by a data processor, ~~where the~~

~~computer program is stored in a computer-readable memory media, the computer-program-~~

~~implemented method~~ wherein operations are performed when the computer program is

executed by the data processor, the operations comprising:

receiving queries from users regarding at least one entity of interest, wherein the

queries seek data relevant to the probability that a transaction with the entity

of interest will be successful; and

using ~~acquired~~ knowledge ~~of~~ acquired when responding to previously submitted

queries which sought data relevant to the probability that a transaction with

the entity of interest would be successful when making predictions

concerning the future performance of ~~an~~ the entity of interest.

21.   (Currently amended) A ~~computer-program-implemented method~~ computer program product as in claim 20, ~~further comprising~~ wherein the operation further comprise analyzing query patterns and at least one of an actual or predicted performance of the entity of interest, and observing correlations between queries, query patterns and performance to facilitate the prediction of future performance of the entity of interest.

22.   (Currently amended) A ~~computer-program-implemented method~~ computer program product as in claim 20, ~~further comprising~~ wherein the operations further comprise returning, in response to receiving a meta-query from a user, information that is descriptive of previously submitted queries about the entity of interest.

23.   (Currently amended) A ~~computer-program-implemented method~~ computer program product as in claim 20, ~~further comprising~~ wherein the operations further comprise returning, in response to receiving a meta-query from a user, edited information that is descriptive of previously submitted queries about the entity of interest.

24.   (Currently amended) A ~~computer-program-implemented method~~ computer program product as in claim 20, ~~further comprising~~ wherein the operations further comprise returning, in response to receiving a meta-query from a user, copies of previously submitted queries about the entity of interest.

25.   (Currently amended) The ~~computer-program-implemented method~~ computer program product as in claim 20, ~~further comprising~~ wherein the operations further comprise collecting query-relevant data comprising at least one of time, date, location, and identity.

26.   (Currently amended) The ~~computer-program-implemented method~~ computer program product as in claim 25, ~~further comprising~~ wherein the operations further comprise filtering the enhanced performance prediction information to remove at least some of the collected query-relevant data.

27.   (Currently amended) The ~~computer-program-implemented method~~ computer program product as in claim 20, ~~further comprising~~ wherein the operations further comprise registering for automatically querying the acquired knowledge.

28.   (Currently amended) The ~~computer-program-implemented method~~ computer program product as in claim 27, where automatic querying is initiated upon the occurrence of at least one specified criterion.

29.   (Currently amended) A computer program product stored on a computer readable media for directing operations of a data processor to execute a method to receive submitted queries for performance prediction information concerning an entity of interest; to collect query-relevant data from the submitted queries; to store the query-relevant data; and

to use at least some of the query-relevant data to provide enhanced performance prediction

information <u>concerning the entity of interest</u>.

30.　(Currently amended)　A system for producing enhanced performance

prediction information, the system comprising: means for receiving submitted queries,

<u>wherein the queries seek data relevant to a probability that a transaction with an entity of</u>

<u>interest will be successful</u>; <u>memory</u> means for storing query-relevant data; and <u>data processor</u>

means for producing enhanced performance prediction information that comprises the query-

relevant data.

31.　(Currently amended)　A system comprising:

<u>a performance prediction service for receiving queries seeking performance</u>

　　　　<u>prediction information concerning an entity of interest, and for providing</u>

　　　　<u>performance prediction information in response to the received queries;</u>

a communications device for operation with ~~a~~ <u>the</u> performance prediction service,

　　　　comprising a communications interface adapted for at least one of submitting

　　　　a meta-query to the <u>performance prediction</u> service and for receiving

　　　　enhanced performance prediction information from the <u>performance</u>

　　　　<u>prediction</u> service~~; and~~

~~the performance prediction service~~.

32.　(Currently amended)　The system of claim 31 where the performance

prediction service comprises:

> a source of data comprising at least performance prediction data, the data source being coupled to a query component adapted for receiving the meta-query and executing the meta-query;

> a data gather component adapted for collecting query-relevant data for fulfilling meta-queries, and storing the query-relevant data in a submitted query database; and

> a meta-query component coupled to the submitted query database adapted for querying the query-relevant data to produce the ~~enhance~~ enhanced performance prediction information in response to the reception of the meta-query from the communications device.

33.   (Currently amended) A computer program product stored on a computer readable media, the computer program product comprising:

> a query component for receiving queries submitted by users for data relevant to the probability that a transaction with an entity of interest will be successful;

> a data gathering component for storing relevant data about submitted queries; and

> a meta-query component responsive to a meta-query for returning information regarding previously submitted queries.